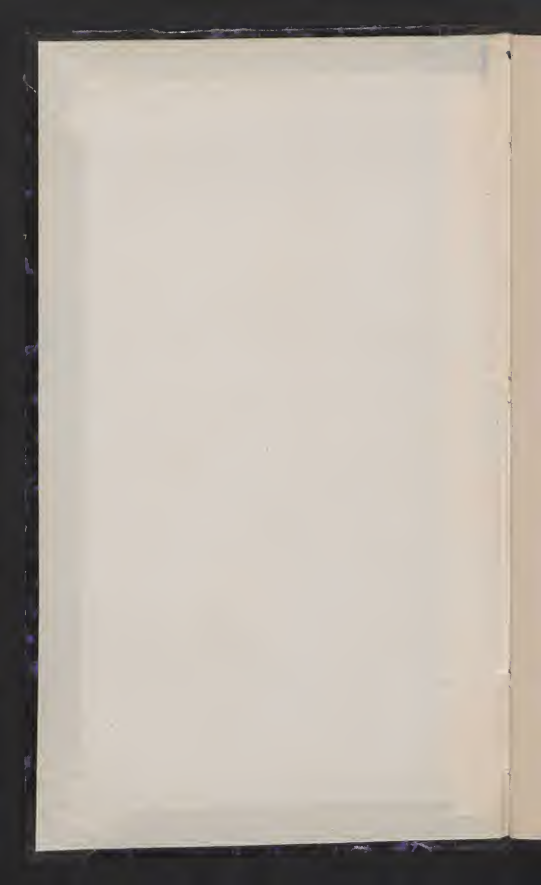
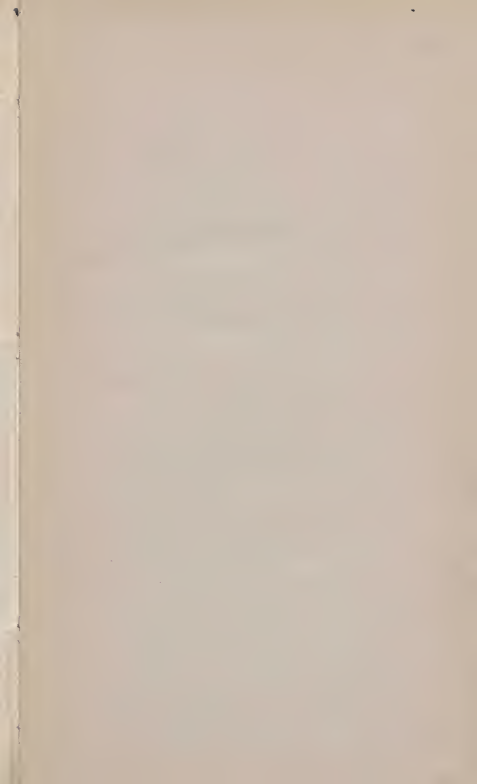
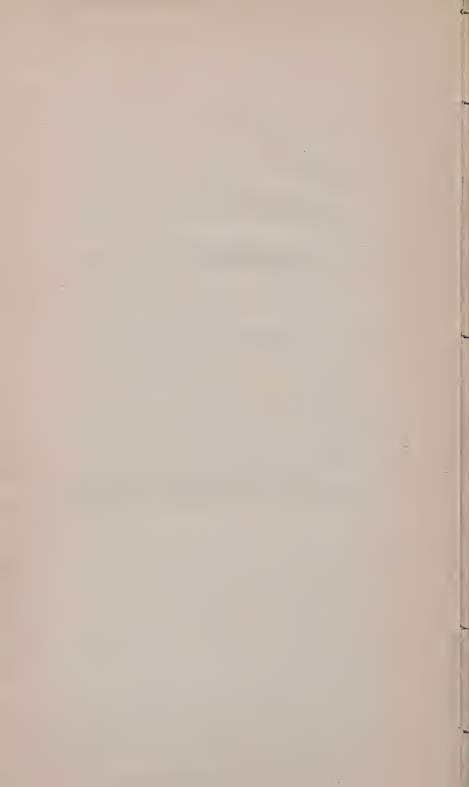


Rapp:

Statement to the Faculty
of Advocates.



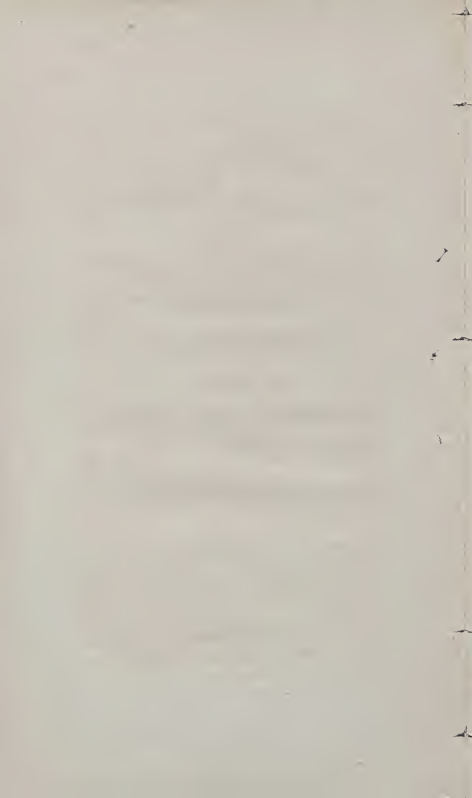




STATEMENT
TO THE
FACULTY OF ADVOCATES,
BY
THORL. GUDM. REPP;
ON THE SUBJECT
OF THE
STATEMENT BY THE CURATORS OF
THE LIBRARY.

Thors. Gudm. Repp

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY ANDREW SHORTREDE.
MDCCCXXXIV.



STATEMENT
TO THE
FACULTY OF ADVOCATES.

MR REPP begs leave to commence this statement by declaring conscientiously, that he never entertained for the Curators, as a body, any feelings inconsistent with perfect respect; and to such of them as have honoured him with more intimate acquaintance, he feels grateful, and is proud to acknowledge such favours and kindness as he has met with at their hands. He can also safely affirm that, by no step he has taken on this occasion, did he mean or intend any disrespect to them personally or otherwise, but only self defence.

In farther adverting to a subject which, as it is personal, is peculiarly painful to his feelings, Mr Repp will submit to the Faculty, *first*, his views respecting the nature of his office, and the differences of opinion which have arisen between the Curators and himself upon this point; *secondly*, he will touch as briefly as possible on the manner in which his literary attainments have been put to the test under the Curators in the library and elsewhere; and, *thirdly*, he will take the liberty of pointing out certain ways in which he is humbly of opinion his services may yet be turned to good account by the Faculty.

I. Whatever opinion may be entertained of the original letters and documents relative to Mr Repp's engagement, in so far as regards their formality or accuracy, it humbly appears that it would be extremely difficult to discover in them the slightest indication that they alluded to any other than a *Literary Office*. This office was, by the individual who, as a responsible agent for the Faculty, opened the correspondence with several gentlemen

abroad, sometimes termed the *Secretaryship of the Advocates' Library*, sometimes the *Office of Assistant keeper of the Advocates' Library*. Besides, all the circumstances of the invitation render it abundantly manifest that no other than a literary engagement could be contemplated. To maintain the contrary would be to maintain, that a learned body of lawyers found it absolutely necessary to engage a foreigner to discharge the ordinary duties of clerk and porter, an idea certainly never hinted at to Mr Repp at the time the correspondence took place, and, in all probability, never seriously entertained by any one. Certainly the persons in Denmark, applied to on this occasion, did not belong to that class of society out of which clerks and porters are usually chosen. Neither Bishop Muller, then only Professor of Theology, nor Dr Rask, were likely to have been applied to concerning a person of mere mechanical or labouring qualifications. On the contrary, superfluous as it seemed in Denmark, an exemption from mechanical employment is expressly mentioned as one of the advantages which the learned individual would enjoy who should accept the proffered office. As an inducement to Dr Rask, whose philological and general knowledge was so pre-eminent, to accede to the proposed arrangement, he is expressly informed that he "would have very little concern with the ordinary drudgery of a public library," and that "the labour of taking and giving books belongs to another department." It is highly probable that Dr Rask would have expected as much, even had it not been expressed; and it will hardly be denied that every foreigner called to the same office, belonging to the same class of society, with qualifications of the same kind, however different in degree, had the fullest right to expect the same advantages.

If any question or doubt has arisen on this point, it probably must, in some measure, be owing to the circumstance that the case of express invitations to foreigners from large public bodies is excessively rare in this country, so much so, that Mr Repp verily believes that his is the only one that has occurred during several centuries. In Russia, as well as in different parts of Germany, where such cases are more frequent, a question like the present could hardly have arisen.

At the same time, Mr Repp has no fear to confess, and accordingly does so frankly, that his notions respecting the management of public libraries are continental, more than British, and he does not by any means affect to deny, that on the Continent, a certain limited share of mechanical work is considered compatible with the superior, and even the principal offices in great public libraries. In the *Bibliothèque du Roi* of Paris this, no doubt, is not the case. In that institution, probably the best managed, as well as the largest of the sort in the world, mechanical business is separate and distinct from literary avocations, even of an inferior description. But in accepting of the engagement, which induced him to leave his native country, Mr Repp anticipated that share of mechanical labour, for which intellect and knowledge more than muscular exertion might be required, and by no means objected to it, as long as the demands of this kind were restricted within reasonable limits; that is to say, as long as no more mechanical labour should be expected of Mr Repp than of any other man of letters connected with the library. On the other hand, Mr Repp was certainly far from suspecting that he ever would be called upon to exert himself in a labouring capacity to a degree utterly inconsistent with a literary character—nay, to nearly as great a degree as some of the porters in the library. Not only equity to Mr Repp, but the dignity of the Faculty of Advocates, utterly precluded every suspicion of such a demand being possible. For what purpose could Mr Repp be brought from Denmark to assist the principal librarian, unless with a view to his superior attainments in at least some branches of knowledge, with which branches circumstances prevented the head librarian from being so thoroughly conversant.

The peculiar view of Mr Repp's engagement, apparently entertained by one or two gentlemen,—that be it originally what it might, mechanical or literary, the Curators were at liberty to convert it into whatever they pleased,—does not surely deserve any notice, and is not likely to be one which the Faculty ever will adopt. Mr Repp may also here mention, that he looks upon the nature of his engagement, in so far as he is concerned, to be regulated mainly by the correspondence which took place, and not at all by the minute of Curators, no

copy of which was ever transmitted to him, and which, indeed, he never saw till several years after he had entered into office in the library.

Having thus briefly explained his views upon this point, Mr Repp would next direct attention to the fact, that the charges against him, laid before the Faculty in the Curators' statement, all refer to mechanical employment — and mechanical employment of such a nature and degree, that even if demanded of a common porter it would have been held excessive. In resisting injunctions of this kind, Mr Repp was not actuated solely by the considerations above stated, but also by the conviction, that his undertaking such a charge would inevitably tend to bring the library into a state of still greater confusion. It appeared, too, that Mr Repp was not unsupported among the Curators themselves, either in his general or special views with regard to this matter, unless he entirely misunderstood the expressions of some of these gentlemen ; for,

1. About two years ago, at a time when one of the present Curators came into office, that gentleman stated to Mr Repp, "that his opinion was, that Mr Repp's situation in the Law Room was very unsuitable, but that he considered it only as *temporary* ; adding, that it being now near the close of a session, Mr Repp would retain the charge of the Law Room till the end of it ; but, in course of the next vacation, resume the charge of the Historical Department."

2. The present Lord Advocate, both at the time he was Curator, and subsequently, frequently expressed the opinion that Mr Repp's appointment was of a literary, and not of a *mechanical nature*.

3. Mr Thomas Maitland also expressed to Mr Repp an opinion that his appointment was chiefly of a literary character.

5. The Curator above mentioned, (No. 1,) who is well acquainted with the library, seeing Mr Repp's note of Remonstrance and Protest to the Curators, after he had been charged with attendance in the sixteen repositories of books in the lower part of the library, agreed with Mr Repp, "that it was impossible to undertake such a charge."

It certainly was not difficult to judge that this charge was impracticable; for the duties of the Law Room are such, even during vacation, that they require a constant attendance—there generally being present, on an average, half a dozen of gentlemen, searching for law authorities, and preparing papers. These naturally feel inconvenienced, if he, in whose charge the Law Room is understood to be, is out of the way; and his being in the opposite end of the library, surrounded with applicants for books of a miscellaneous nature, is hardly admitted to be a good apology by men of business, who naturally think that their demands ought to take precedence of all such applications. Mr Repp has, accordingly, been frequently blamed by different gentlemen for attempting to do so much; and thus the order of the Curators now alluded to, naturally operated to diminish that good will and favour which Mr Repp hoped to enjoy from the members of Faculty, as it placed him in a situation in which it was impossible that he could give satisfaction to every body. Even the assistance of a porter was denied to Mr Repp on this occasion; and thus a severer mechanical duty was laid on him than on any individual in the library, either at the time, or at any other time during the eight years Mr Repp has been acquainted with it.

While the charge of the sixteen repositories was given to Mr Repp, one of the porters had, and still has, a comparatively easy charge in the historical department; and, on the whole, Mr Repp cannot help being of opinion, that the exigencies of the library by no means required or countenanced the arrangement which was actually made.

It is with great reluctance that Mr Repp makes any allusion to former differences of opinion betwixt the Curators and himself; but in consequence of certain passages in their statement, he finds it absolutely necessary briefly to allude to the subject.

The Curators state,—“ But during all this time, (the summer of 1831,) he was stationed almost entirely in the Upper Library, for the purpose of taking charge of it, and also of giving out and receiving books; and though that Library was shut up in November, 1831, *yet he was directed to take charge of giving and receiving*

books belonging to it when required, while he was desired to sit in the Law Room, for the purpose of writing the Catalogue of Pamphlets. To the performance of these duties he made no objection." Mr Repp must solemnly aver, that against the performance of these duties he made repeated remonstrances. He stated to the Curators more than once at their meetings,—that applications, which necessarily took him to the Historical Room, were so frequent, that they utterly prevented him from making any progress in the catalogue, which he was to compile sitting in the Law Room: That although they had declared and ordained that the Historical Room should be shut, *de facto* it was never shut: That one applicant always succeeded the other, and that Mr Repp was, to the injury of his health, retained there from ten o'clock in the morning, till four in the afternoon. The Curators paid little attention to these remonstrances, but merely remarked, that the room being perfectly cold, nobody would stay in it for any length of time; that Mr Repp ought to give the book wanted, or shew the room when desired, and that being done, desire the visitors to walk out and shut the room, in order to return to the Law Room, where he was to compile the Catalogue. Mr Repp, however, found that these two stations being separated from each other by a long passage, and a two storey staircase, the applications to the Historical Room were so frequent as very rarely to allow him time to reach the Law Room, before he was again called away. Thus for a considerable time he made next to no progress in the catalogue; yet under these circumstances, fairly and frequently represented by Mr Repp to the Curators, and in spite of his request that they would enter his remonstrance in their minutes, they only chose to enter a reprehension against Mr Repp for not proceeding with the catalogue more rapidly; although many gentlemen agreed with him in thinking that the performance of these two duties was impossible. Nevertheless, Mr Repp never doubted that in this case, as well as in the one now under consideration, the Curators imposed duties under the influence of erroneous information.

II. Mr Repp may now be permitted to say a few words as to the performance of the *literary* duties imposed upon

him. And in the first place, he can most conscientiously declare, that, to the best of his recollection, the Curators never did, either collectively or individually, express to him any dissatisfaction or disapprobation, except in the single case of which he has just spoken, when they were of opinion, that he did not proceed with the pamphlet catalogue with sufficient speed. If the Curators have any recollection of any other instance, he now respectfully, but earnestly, requests them to point it out. He makes this very respectful request to all the gentlemen who have been Curators during the eight years he has held office in the Advocates' Library.*

Mr Repp is happy, on the other hand, that he can point out some cases, from which it appears that he enjoyed the confidence of the Curators in literary matters, and where even approbation was expressed. He only regrets that the trials made as yet of his literary attainments have been but few, and, with a single exception, on a limited scale. But,

1. In the year 1828, one of the Curators requested Mr Repp to revise and edit a manuscript procured from Sweden, as also several printed documents connected with the same subject. The Swedish manuscript was in many places difficult to decipher, from an attempt having been made to imitate the very *ductus literarum* of an ancient manuscript obliterated in several places; the idiom was at once foreign and obsolete, and thus accuracy in reading and editing presupposed more than one critical qualification: the accompanying documents were partly in Latin, partly in old Danish; and they were taken from a printed book so replete with faults and typographical errors, that Mr Repp had to correct several on every page. Mr Repp is not ashamed to exhibit this little task beside any other of the same kind that may have been performed in this country. Mr Maitland's opinion respecting it is expressed in the preface to the book.(†)

* It may be proper to mention that Mr Robert Thomson, once or twice, on looking over Mr Repp's catalogue of pamphlets, suggested a different title for a pamphlet to that which Mr Repp had given it, and Mr Repp adopted the suggestion.

† Besides a commendatory expression on page vii, and the confidence implied in extensive extracts being made from Mr Repp's correspondence with Mr Maitland, that gentleman adds, "It may be satisfactory to the

2. Another Curator, a distinguished historian, had occasion to make extracts from an ancient Portuguese Chronicle. Mr Repp prepared for him a translation of the passages he required, and he is glad to know he did so to his satisfaction.

3. The present Lord Advocate repeatedly suggested to Mr Repp a literary plan of such a nature as implied great confidence in Mr Repp's attainments; and it referred to a department of literature in which it was not probable that Mr Repp would have found many competitors in this country. That the plan has not hitherto been acted upon, arises from the circumstance of Mr Repp not having had any prospect opened to him, that its execution would be attended with adequate remuneration.

4. Mr Repp's little work, "On Trial by Jury in Scandinavia," received the approbation of several gentlemen who have been Curators, and of a considerable number of the Faculty. Mr Repp has in his possession letters by which this averment can be substantiated, and which are as satisfactory to him as the favourable public judgment of critics, both in this country and abroad, with which the book has been honoured.

5. Were it necessary, Mr Repp could produce a considerable number of documents, both from this and from other countries, in which opinions are stated, both officially and extra-officially, respecting his literary attainments, from quarters of the very highest authority; and if the Faculty shall deem that these ought to be examined, he is quite ready to exhibit them. They certainly would tend to facilitate the decision of the question, whether Mr Repp possesses sufficient knowledge for the compilation of catalogues.

6. While engaged in compiling a catalogue of the northern manuscripts, Mr Repp acted under a committee which had been appointed with the concurrence and

members of the club (the Bannatyne Club) to know, that the volume now presented to them has passed through the press under the superintendence of Mr Repp, with the occasional assistance of Mr Jamieson of the General Register House, and of Mr Alexander Macdonald, assistant curator of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. To these gentlemen every acknowledgment is due for their valuable editorial labours. Of the mode in which the work has been edited, Mr Repp gives the following account," &c.

approbation of the Curators. The convener of this committee (Mr Cosmo Innes) often saw Mr Repp's catalogue of northern manuscripts, examined it in detail, and at several times expressed his complete satisfaction with it; and, upon the whole, it is humbly believed, that this is a better catalogue of manuscripts than has hitherto been made for the Advocates' Library,—that it is abundantly descriptive of each particular manuscript, that it accurately states the contents of each, and that as it describes a branch of literature but little known in this country, it is on that account more explicit and full than usual. It was with the entire approbation and sanction of Mr Innes that it was written in Latin; and, in general, Mr Repp is happy to observe, that during the period he had the pleasure of a frequent literary intercourse with that gentleman, no instance occurred of any unkind or unpleasant feeling.

7. The opinion of the keeper of the Advocates' Library respecting Mr Repp's qualifications as a librarian, is officially expressed in a report, dated 2d March, 1827, when Mr Repp had been about a year in the library. "Nor can we venture," says the learned keeper, "to make use of the second and third printed volumes (of the Library Catalogues) without collating a great proportion of the entries, as many of them are evidently very inaccurate and bewildering. In this and other branches of labour I have now obtained the assistance of Thorleif Gudmundson Repp, A.M. of the University of Copenhagen, whose very extensive knowledge of ancient and modern languages has eminently qualified him for such an undertaking. He has begun with an experiment upon the separate entries in *Ugolini Thesaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum*, a publication consisting of thirty-four volumes in folio; and in his progress has found much to alter and amend." And prior to this experiment, *i. e.* during the summer of 1826, and winter, 1827, Mr Repp had compiled a catalogue of books of general literature, which he has every reason to believe gave satisfaction to the keeper, and was thought suitable for the purpose for which it was intended.

8. THE SPANISH LIBRARY.—The only duty of very great importance which the Curators ever imposed on Mr Repp, was the arrangement of the Spanish library,

and the examination of its catalogues; and he hopes that his execution of this task was such as to give them no reason to blame him for want of zeal, accuracy, knowledge, or faithfulness. This being a subject of more than ordinary consequence, Mr Repp begs leave to recapitulate that part of the history of this library with which he is acquainted.

The Spanish, or, as it is sometimes called, the Astorga Library, having been bought in London of Mr Thorp, a bookseller, and brought to Edinburgh in 1825, was at first deposited in the Faculty's warehouse in the Royal Exchange, in the boxes in which it had been sent from London. Soon after Mr Repp's arrival in Scotland, many questions were put to him by members of Faculty respecting this library, such as, How large it was? What it contained? Why it was not placed? Why some part of it, at least, was not placed? Whether he had seen the catalogue of it? Whether it was rich in Spanish poetry and novels? Whether the historical part was extensive? &c. To these, and many questions of the same kind, coming naturally from gentlemen who knew that they had paid for the collection three thousand pounds, Mr Repp could give no answer, never having seen the collection. To the question, why this library was not placed? it certainly never occurred to him to answer "that there was no room," in as much as several places could have been pointed out in the library, where temporary shelves and presses might have been put up; indeed, Mr Repp believes that he was the first person who pointed out the room where it actually was placed some years after. The demand for placing it was very general, and in 1827 repeatedly urged by the Curators. It is certain that Mr Repp never shewed the smallest reluctance to undertake this duty. It turned out, however, that at this time the original catalogue of the collection, according to which it had been sold, could no where be found, although, as Mr Repp was given to understand, Mr Kinloch, the convener of a committee appointed to inquire into several matters relative to the library, ordered every search to be made for it; and as it appeared unadvisable to place the collection without a catalogue, the learned keeper himself proceeded to the compilation of one from the collection itself; and at this

period he reported of the collection to the Faculty, under date March, 1827, as follows :—

“ In our preparations for an alphabetical catalogue of all the printed works in the library, we have made great progress ; but the completion of this formidable task has been retarded by the recent purchase of a large collection of books, chiefly in the Spanish language, and formerly belonging to the Marquis of Astorga. This collection *consists of about seven thousand volumes*, and, as has been asserted, is the best Spanish library that is to be found beyond the limits of Spain. So far as I am capable of forming any opinion, it appears to be a great acquisition to the Faculty and to the country ; and the purchase of it cannot but be regarded as an act equally spirited and laudable. When so important an object is in view, the rules of ordinary and calculating caution must not be too rigidly followed : such another opportunity, if this had been suffered to escape, might not have occurred for several generations. The library has thus acquired many curious and many valuable books, which we could scarcely have hoped to collect in the ordinary method, and in a country which has always been very scantily supplied with Spanish publications. But this sudden accumulation, so desirable in itself, has increased our labour, and delayed the completion of the catalogue. Of the Spanish library I have now begun to make a catalogue, and am proceeding with as much despatch as my other avocations, sufficiently numerous and variegated, will permit. It is not a little to be regretted that no accommodation can at present be found in the library for so extensive a selection of books. It must be satisfactory for the Faculty to learn, that of these books a very large proportion, so far as I have already examined them, belongs to the departments of history and jurisprudence. There is likewise an ample collection of Spanish poetry ; and the collection of Spanish theology, whatever may be its intrinsic merit, is not the least curious part of this library.”

In the following year, the compilation of the catalogue being finished, the Spanish library was again deposited in its old place in the boxes which formerly contained it, where it still was found by a new body of Curators, who had come into office subsequent to the 8th of July, 1829.

These Curators were no less anxious than the former to see the collection placed, and they accordingly, in 1830, reported to the Faculty as follows:—"SPANISH LIBRARY. The catalogue of this valuable collection they found completed by Dr Irving when they came into office; and, although *they have not been able to procure sufficient room in the present apartments for depositing the whole of it in shelves*, they find that there is a small apartment entering into the Thorkelin Room, in which temporary shelves may be placed, so as to contain at least *the whole historical branch of it, which consists, it is believed, of about three thousand volumes*; they have, therefore, directed that such shelves shall be put up, and the historical collection deposited in them, with as little delay as possible. The Curators regret, that from the present *want of accommodation, they cannot suggest any mode* by which the rest of this library may at present be made accessible."*

Thus it appears that, even in the year 1830, and after the new catalogue had been finished, the Curators still entertained an opinion that this collection was as large as had been reported in 1827, since they thought that the historical part of it, which in reality does not exceed one thousand six hundred volumes, consisted of three thousand, and that want of room was the cause why the entire collection could not be placed. Mr Repp having previously, according to instructions received from one of the Curators, prepared *an exact copy* of the catalogue compiled by the keeper, was now desired to place and arrange this collection, and mark the place of every book in his copy of the catalogue. To the surprise of the Curators, as well as of other gentlemen of the Faculty, Mr Repp, in the execution of this task, found room for the *whole collection* in the place which he had at first pointed out, and in which the Curators expected to find room only for the historical department.

The small space which the collection now occupied naturally gave rise to the suspicion that it did not amount to *seven thousand volumes*. Accordingly, a member of Faculty, who had been several times with Mr Repp while he was arranging the collection, undertook

* Curators' Report, 1830, p. 5.

to ascertain the number of volumes entered in the catalogue which had been prepared by the keeper, and he reported that these amounted only to THREE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX. But Mr Repp subsequently ascertained, by counting the volumes themselves, that the actual number was somewhat smaller, and very little exceeding three thousand. This discrepancy arose from the circumstance, that in the Astorga collection, some publications of small extent are in several cases bound in *one volume*, and yet each has, as it ought to have, its title inserted in the catalogue; and thus, although it only forms a part of a volume in reality, it there appears as a distinct and independent volume.

Mr Repp now made a report concerning the collection to the Curators, and he is well aware that this report at that time appeared to them to be of a very grave and important character. The report comprises forty-two pages 4to, and is dated the 7th September, 1830. The first part, which is written in Latin, after giving a general survey of the duties imposed on Mr Repp with regard to the Spanish Library, explicitly states the great deficiency in the supposed amount of volumes, along with some other circumstances. The second part contains a list of important Spanish works not to be found in the Astorga collection, with an English introduction and several bibliographical notes in English. Mr Repp here pointed out the works of about *one hundred and twenty* distinguished Spanish authors which the Astorga library wants. Mr Repp may be permitted to state, that from the pains he bestowed on this report, he will never feel any hesitation or reluctance in laying it before the Faculty and the world as a specimen of research and knowledge fully proportionate to its object.

It appears from this report, that in 1830, there was not to be found in the Astorga library a complete edition of the works of any of the most illustrious Spanish poets or dramatists; that there were none of Lope de Vega's plays, unless a few may be found in an insignificant collection of old plays, termed "*Comedias Varias*;" that instead of seven thousand volumes, there were only about three thousand; that of these about one thousand six hundred were historical, and a large proportion of the remainder consisted of Roman Catholic theology and

Spanish jurisprudence, some of the most valuable works of the latter class being imperfect; and in addition to all this, it appeared by a separate list of defective works made out by Mr Repp, that there were *twenty-eight* of these of which only some volumes were to be found, and, unfortunately, these are in most cases works of considerable value and importance, including Tassi's Calderon and others.*

In the same report also, Mr Repp represented to the Curators the very great number of duplicates which this small collection contained; that not only there were sometimes three and sometimes four editions of the same work, but frequently there was more than one copy of the same edition. Of Mariana's History of Spain there were six copies, one of them being a French translation; although the Faculty previously possessed two or three copies of Mariana. There were likewise, if Mr Repp is not much mistaken, at least four copies of Boadilla's "*Politica para Corregidores*," which is a practical book for country justices in Spain, in two vols. folio. On the whole, the amount of duplicates appeared surprising for so small a collection.

Mr Repp never learned what was the result of the Curators' investigations with regard to the Astorga library, except that it seems that either about this time, or shortly previous, the *original catalogue of sale* was recovered. This was given by the Curators into Mr Repp's hands, and he was directed to ascertain how far it agreed with the catalogue prepared by the keeper. Mr Repp accordingly made a new report to the Curators respecting the catalogue; and he regrets much that he has not now access to this document. He made an application to the Curators on the 21st instant to be permitted the use of it for a short time, and they very kindly ordered a search to be made for it, as well as for another document which Mr Repp desired to have a sight of; but hitherto neither the one nor the other has

* The dramatic literature of Spain has by the best informed bibliographers been said "to be larger in extent than that of all other countries in Europe collectively;" it may be judged how much was received of this immense mass, from the fact that the whole *poetic department of the Astorga library, of which the dramatic branch formed only a very small part*, does not exceed three hundred and thirty volumes.

been found. Mr Repp, however, has a distinct recollection of a few things stated in the report alluded to, —viz. 1st, That the discrepancy as to the number of volumes in the original and in the keeper's catalogue was not considerable; but, 2d, That there was some discrepancy as to the editions of certain valuable works, it sometimes appearing that those received here were less valuable than those entered in the original catalogue; and 3d, That the condition of the Sale Catalogue was in a high degree objectionable, inasmuch as it was not numbered nor paged, nor in any instance provided with a catchword, and thus, each individual page was quite independent of that which preceded or followed; and farther, that although a bound book, and apparently bound in London, it was, nevertheless, very considerably thicker in the back than at the front. Mr Repp therefore reported, that it was altogether such a document as appeared to him ought not to have been received without inquiry.

Subsequently to the period of the report by Mr Repp, now referred to, a communication relative to the Spanish Library was made to the Faculty by the Curators in an annual report, bearing no date, but which must have been laid before the Faculty, either in 1831 or 1832. It is signed by the following gentlemen:—Messrs George Joseph Bell, James Keay, John Dunlop, James Walker, Robert Thomson, and is as follows:—

“Spanish Library.—The whole of this library has been arranged in shelves in the entrance to the Thorkelin Room, and has been for some months accessible to members of the Faculty. The Curators regret to mention, that the extent of this library is not nearly equal to what was originally supposed, as they have the best reason to believe that it does not, at the very utmost, exceed 3400 volumes. They are informed, however, that the library was sold according to a catalogue, now in the hands of Dr Irving, which was compared, at the time of sale, with the books sold, and they have no reason to doubt that all the books thus sold were transmitted to the library. A list has been made up of such works in this library as are defective, and also of various popular or valuable Spanish works which are not to be found in it, with the view of having

the former completed, and the latter supplied, as soon as the state of the funds and the other necessary demands on them will permit."

Thus Mr Repp's report respecting the extent of the Library, which had cost the Faculty so large a sum, was entirely confirmed; and, in reviewing all the reports which have been made since 1826, (and they are not few,) concerning the purchase in question, Mr Repp must be permitted to claim for himself the merit of having been the first to point out its real extent and value, and of having made known, though with considerable pain and reluctance, and after much laborious research, how greatly it fell short of the expectations which had been raised regarding it; so greatly indeed, that there is every reason to fear that no purchaser could be found who would give more for the whole collection than £400.

III. In attempting to point out certain tasks of a literary nature still to be performed in the library, Mr Repp must apologize for being at present much more brief than the importance of the subject warrants; but the other parts of this statement have already occupied so much space, that he must now restrict himself to the following brief suggestions:—

1. A BETTER ARRANGEMENT of the library than at present exists is exceedingly desirable. It is sometimes said, that the confusion arises from the confinement and inconvenient structure of the *locale*: this Mr Repp does not altogether deny; but, at the same time, it must be admitted, that *the more inconvenient and confined the rooms, the more indispensable is good arrangement*. In almost every apartment in the lower library, not only may some fragments of many different departments of literature be found, but each department of literature, which may have its *nucleus* in one particular room, is spread through several, without any plan or order. Thus, for example, we find in one room, 1, Novels; 2, Tours and Voyages; 3, Periodical Works; 4, Poetry; 5, Classics; 6, Pamphlets; 7, A press containing almost every kind of literature. In another we find, 1, Italian, French, Spanish, and English polite literature; 2, Political Economy; 3, House of Lords and House of

Commons' Journals; 4, Encyclopedias; 5, History of Painting and the Fine Arts; 6, Works on Botany; 7, Novels. In short, every one examining the lower apartments may satisfy himself that, with the exception of the law room, the civil law room, and the civil law gallery, the arrangement, or rather want of arrangement, warrants Mr Repp in arriving at the conclusion, that improvement is highly desirable. Mr Repp, at the same time, readily admits, that the existing confusion partly owes its origin to late movements and changes occasioned by the loss of two rooms.

2. A SYSTEMATIC CATALOGUE has long been a desideratum in the Advocates' Library. It is, indeed, more needed in this library than in most other similar institutions; for it is not unfrequent that applications are made for books on a certain subject, without any author, who has written on that subject, being known; and thus the alphabetical catalogues are of no avail. The observation sometimes made, that any systematic catalogue will answer for any library, is more specious than true; for not only is literature not stationary, thousands of volumes being added to the sum total every year, but literature has, besides, everywhere more or less a *local character*. Certain departments of literature, which even in England excite little interest, are much run after in Scotland, and *vice versa*. Particular classes of books are, consequently, much more numerous in some libraries than in others; and, indeed, are frequently not to be found any where else. A systematic catalogue, in order to be well compiled, requires in the author a minute encyclopedical knowledge of science and literature.

3. There is a vast collection of books and tracts (but chiefly tracts) belonging to the Faculty, known by the name of *Count Dietrichs's Collection*, which, in point of number, is almost equal to all the rest of the Advocates' Library. At the time Mr Repp had this collection before him, which was in 1828, he faithfully reported its state and condition to the Curators, and what he thought of its value. In pronouncing it extremely valuable and important, he can conscientiously say, that his judgment was not formed on any vague or unsubstantial grounds. It is certain that applications have been made by members of Faculty for law books and

tracts contained in this collection, and not to be found elsewhere in the Advocates' Library; and surely it were to be regretted if such books should be ordered anew from the Continent, in consequence of the Dietrichs' collection being in such a state of confusion that it is quite inaccessible.*

4. A large public library can be in various ways benefited by maintaining a continual correspondence with libraries and literary institutions abroad; not only because by such means copies of manuscripts and rare and original documents may be obtained, (as was the case with the Bothwell MS. of which a copy was obtained from Sweden through Mr Repp's means,) but also, because such learned bodies abroad frequently publish valuable and instructive tracts never meant or intended for sale, and which they are proud to communicate to such literary institutions as maintain any correspondence with them. The belief that it is for the mutual interest of all literary institutions in Europe to maintain a frequent literary commerce and intercourse, has long been acted upon on the Continent, and is now beginning to be received in Great Britain. Some members of Faculty are aware, that Mr Repp's letters to distinguished men abroad have been kindly attended to by them.

5. *And lastly*, Although the literary duties, in a public library, certainly comprise more than the mere cataloguing and arranging of books, yet the cataloguing and arranging comprise more than generally is apprehended. Nothing can be more clear than that, if there are to be found in a library, books written in more than forty languages, and in which more than twenty-five alphabets, or systems of letters, are used, the knowledge of three or four alphabets alone is insufficient for cataloguing. In the Advocates' Library are books in which the following alphabets are used: the Latin, Greek, German, Anglo-Saxon, Irish, Runic, Slavonic, Russian, Glagolitic, Mæso-gothic, Georgian, two very distinct Armenian alphabets, two distinct Arabic alphabets, Hebrew, Samaritan, Syriac, Ethiopic, Zend, Sanscrit, Singalese or Burmese. And every one knows that it is utterly

* This great collection has lain, ever since it was brought to this country, eight or nine years ago, in cellars inaccessible to the Faculty.

impossible to decipher even the title of a book without understanding the alphabet in which it is written, unless, indeed, the title is also given in some other language, such as English or Latin, which, no doubt, sometimes, though not always, is the case.

It is certainly more than ever was promised for Mr Repp, either by himself or his friends in Denmark, that he should be acquainted with all these alphabets. It affords him, however, much pleasure to be able distinctly to aver, that he has so competent a knowledge of at least *twenty* systems of characters, that he is able to read books in which they are used; and that his knowledge of the languages themselves farther enables him to ascertain the contents of every book written in them. It may be said, that the cases in which this extent of knowledge is required are not numerous—and they certainly are not *very numerous*, but they increase in number with the increasing size of the Library. Besides, it is surely desirable that a learned establishment should not possess many books respecting which some one of its librarians should not be able to give information.

If a foreigner arrives here who has not thought of acquiring English before his arrival in this country, (and Mr Repp has seen in the Advocates' Library many such, particularly from Italy and France,) it likewise appears advisable that, in the Advocates' Library at least, he should find some one with whom he can converse. Mr Repp has never yet met with any foreigner with whom he could not carry on a mutually intelligible conversation.

In respectfully offering these suggestions, Mr Repp does not mean in the least degree to disparage the qualifications of any of the other officers of the library, or to insinuate that any one of them is not able to perform the duties of his own department.

In now bringing this statement to a conclusion, Mr Repp has only to express his sincere and unaffected regret that he should have been the unfortunate cause of any difference of opinion, either in the Faculty or among the Curators. He has endeavoured throughout the remarks which he has now thought it his duty to submit, to express himself in such a manner as cannot reasonably

give offence to any party, there being nothing for which he is more anxious than to testify the respect he at all times entertains for the Faculty and its office-bearers. He has always hitherto felt most desirous to devote his humble abilities to the promotion of their interests in the department to which he belongs, and being still animated with the same desire, he leaves his case with perfect confidence in the hands of THE FACULTY.

EDINBURGH, *June 24, 1834.*

